

# **Sanpoil Watershed Project**

## **Heritage NEPA**

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## **1.0 Project Effects Analysis**

Based on the project description and proposed implementation strategies, the heritage program personnel have developed design criteria which will ensure the project has no effect on heritage resources. It is the policy of this forest and heritage program to avoid all heritage resources.

## **2.0 Design Criteria**

Any potential effects will be mitigated by coordinating with appropriate project personnel to provide location information to pre-sale, roads, and fuels treatment crews. Sites that are unevaluated must be protected and preserved as if they were eligible for the NRHP. There are two protection options available. Either provisions must be made to avoid direct impacts to the site during the planned activities (e.g. remove the site location from the treatment unit or buffer entire unit or a sufficient amount of the unit to avoid impacts to the site) or, if it is determined this is not a viable option, a plan for site evaluation and effects mitigation must be developed and executed by the Forest or District Heritage Program. Sites that have been evaluated and determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (with concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office) do not need to be actively managed.

In addition to the measures stated above; the following design criteria will be followed during implementation:

1. Avoid all historic properties during implementation. A minimum 20-meter buffer is required on all sites as established by a certified archeologist. The archeology crew has established a 20-meter flagged buffer around monitored and newly recorded sites. Of sites that were not able to be relocated/located the boundaries have not been flagged. These sites may be discovered during the course of implementation. Personnel must notify the Forest Archeologist if there is an inadvertent discovery of archeological resources outside of the flagged boundary of a site or the discovery of other unflagged archeological resources within a unit boundary. In such an instance, operations are to cease until a certified archeologist can develop mitigations. All equipment needs to stay out of the flagged boundary of sites and trees will be felled away from the property. The Forest Archeologist or qualified Heritage Program personnel will work with presale and fuels to identify sites located within unit boundaries and provide location information to the appropriate individuals.
2. Fuels projects involving ladder fuels reduction and lop and scatter of small diameter trees is allowed within site boundaries provided no heavy machinery is used within the flagged boundary of the site. Piles made for later burning must be placed outside of the flagged site boundary. Lop and scatter is allowed within the flagged site boundary for 6 inches or less diameter trees. Special consideration will be taken if a site is visible from a system road. If the site or portion of a site is visible from a system road than screening vegetation shall be left to conceal the site from the road.
3. During controlled burning of units, fire is not allowed into flagged site boundaries. Additional steps will be taken to protect historic sites containing wooden features such as cabins. While unlikely to be used in the context of a controlled burn, the use of retardant on structures and artifacts is not allowed because of the salt and iron content in retardant can stain wood and other materials and cause degradation of metal objects. Digging a standard fire line around the flagged boundaries of sites is the preferred method of protection but the pretreatment of structures with foal or water is allowed, as they will not

cause degradation of features or artifacts. Wrapping structures in heat attenuating materials may also be used, as it is not harmful to the structure. The final method of protection of archeological sites is left to the discretion of fire personnel to fit the unique conditions of each location provided that the protection is adequate.

4. Roads leading into units containing archeological resources that are not to remain open system roads should be closed as soon as possible. The longer that a road is open the greater the risk of exposure of the site to looting or other disturbance. The removal of surrounding cover due to timber harvest/thinning will increase the visibility of the site from access roads and increase visitation to these sites. It is recommended that screening vegetation be left in place to obscure historic sites from the road whenever possible.
5. Project managers are advised to contact the District Archaeologist or Forest Archaeologist if new cultural resources are discovered or if there are changes in the scope of work and/or project area boundaries.

### **3.0 Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects**

The following scenarios could lead to effects to heritage resources: archaeological sites located in cutting units may be directly impacted by new road construction or timber harvesting activities and indirect effects could be caused by increased visitor use due to the increased accessibility from clearing of vegetation and/or the creation of new road. However adherence to the prescribed design criteria will result in no direct and indirect effects to cultural resources as a result of the project.

Cumulative effects were analyzed at the project scale. This scale was chosen for effects analysis because of LMP direction, similar conditions and similar study areas. Relevant past present and reasonably foreseeable future actions were considered. None of these projects would have an effect on heritage resources. Projects would not affect heritage resources because of the implemented design criteria.

### **4.0 Project Mitigation Measures**

Any potential effects will be mitigated by coordinating with appropriate project personnel to provide location information to pre-sale, roads, and fuels treatment crews. Sites that are unevaluated for the National Register of Historic Places must be protected and preserved as if they were eligible. Potential protections include avoiding direct impacts to the site during the planned activities (e.g. remove the site location from the treatment unit or buffer entire unit or a sufficient amount of the unit to avoid impacts to the site) or plan for site evaluation and effects mitigation, which must be developed and executed by the Forest or District Heritage Program. Sites that have been evaluated and determined not eligible for the NRHP (with concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office) do not need to be actively managed.

### **5.0 Tribal Consultation**

The project lead/environmental coordinator issued a letter requesting formal government to government consultation on December 09, 2016. The Spokane Tribe replied and deferred their consultation to the Colville Tribe because the project will take place in their tribal area. The other tribes have not replied or provided input on the project at the time of this report. A

government-to-government meeting between the CCT and FS archaeologists occurred on November 2, 2017 for the purpose of information sharing about the project. Because of the meeting and correspondence, the tribes had no concern with the proposed undertaking/project.

## **6.0 Compliance with Law, Policy, and Regulation**

The Sanpoil Vegetation Management project, with the proposed design criteria, meets the Colville National Forest Land Management Plan (LMP) Standards for Heritage Resources (LMP 75) and Federal regulations concerning Heritage Properties (National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations at 36CFR800). This report incorporates the LMP by reference and is tiered to the Land Management Plan's Final Environmental Impact Statement (USDA Forest Service 2019). Monitoring and maintenance of these sites will continue through the Heritage Program's standard program of work.

The information included in this report is based upon personal review of the project area and/or my knowledge of local site conditions. Based on the results of the field inventory and planned design efforts; a finding of "No Effect" is appropriate. I certify that this analysis follows the applicable policy direction found in Forest Service 2300 Manuals.

Project managers are advised to contact the District Archaeologist or Forest Archaeologist if new cultural resources are discovered or if there are changes in the scope of work and/or project area boundaries.